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ARTICLE 6: EDUCATION, TRAINING AND PUBLIC AWARENESS

PROPOSALS AND OPTIONS ON HOW TO INTEGRATE ARTICLE 6 INTO THE WORK PROGRAMME OF THE SUBSIDIARY BODY FOR SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNOLOGICAL ADVICE

Note by the secretariat

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. The Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA) at its eighth session invited Parties to submit to the secretariat, by December 1998, their views on possible means of promoting the implementation of Article 6 of the Convention for compilation into a miscellaneous document. Three submissions were received from Austria on behalf of the European Community and its member States, Switzerland and Uzbekistan (FCCC/SBSTA/1999/MISC.1). At the same session, the SBSTA invited the secretariat to put forward proposals on how to integrate Article 6 into the work programme of the SBSTA, taking into account the submissions from Parties, for consideration at its tenth session. The SBSTA requested the secretariat to explore the development of more rigorous reporting guidelines on Article 6 for national communications (FCCC/SBSTA/1998/6, para. 37 (g)). The secretariat was also requested "to explore the possibility of establishing a United Nations Climate Change Day to promote awareness of climate change issues at the national and international levels" (FCCC/SBSTA/1998/6, para. 37 (h)).

2. At its tenth session, the Chairman of the SBSTA expressed regret that the small number of submissions received from Parties had prevented the secretariat from putting forward proposals on how to integrate Article 6 into the work programme of the SBSTA (FCCC/SBSTA/1999/6, para. 60). The SBSTA invited Parties to submit further proposals to the secretariat by October 1999 to serve as a basis for a more substantive discussion at the twelfth session of the SBSTA (FCCC/SBSTA/1999/6, para. 61). Two additional submissions, from Kenya and the United States, were received by October 1999 (FCCC/SBSTA/2000/MISC.3).

3. The SBSTA, at its twelfth session, noted that although activities relating to Article 6 are widely recognized as being of importance in implementing the Convention, the issue has so far received little attention from the SBSTA. It also noted that work at the national and international levels has already been undertaken by Parties, intergovernmental organizations (IGOs) and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and that the lessons learned, as well as information products developed, should be compiled and shared, and priority areas identified (FCCC/SBSTA/2000/5, para. 64 (b)). At the same meeting, the SBSTA took note of a verbal report from the secretariat on proposals to advance the implementation of Article 6 of the Convention. The SBSTA requested the secretariat to put Article 6 on the agenda of its fourteenth session and, where appropriate, subsequent sessions (FCCC/SBSTA/2000/5, para. 64 (c)).

II. SYNTHESIS OF EXPERIENCES

A. Submissions from the Parties

4. The submission from Austria on behalf of the European Community and its member States, *inter alia*, called for more specific reporting guidelines with a view to increasing the comparability of information. The need for public awareness was stressed to ensure that the public is fully aware of the threat of climate change. The key role that education systems can play in developing an informed public was noted. The important role that NGOs could play in the wider dissemination of information on climate change was emphasized as complementary to government campaigns on the issue. Austria recommended that the secretariat draw attention to

good practices as reported in the national communications. It proposed that the secretariat review what other United Nations organizations are undertaking relating to Article 6, and if there were important gaps or new areas to be addressed that these be communicated to the SBSTA. Concerning a United Nations "Climate Change Day", Austria urged caution. It suggested reviewing how far related days, such as "World Ozone Day", and "World Environment Day", are helpful and, in that context, considering their use "as a platform for activities regarding climate change" (FCCC/SBSTA/1999/MISC.1).

5. Uzbekistan proposed the creation of national committees, under the aegis of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), to enhance the implementation of Article 6. The task of these committees would be to facilitate the dissemination of available information on climate change to local populations in their local languages. The committee could review and revise training materials for schools. A role was assigned to NGOs to partake in the activities of the committees. The submission noted the need for regular international workshops on education issues, for the training of national specialists and for the exchange of best experience in the field. Uzbekistan noted the need for the secretariat's assistance in finding financial resources and in establishing national institutional structures. It also called on it to work with UNEP for the establishment of national committees to deal with, among other things, the task of dissemination of information on climate change issues. On a "Climate Change Day", Uzbekistan supported a "Day of Issues on Climate Change" to focus public attention on the issues of implementation of the UNFCCC and the Kyoto Protocol. Additionally, such a day could draw attention to environmental policies (FCCC/SBSTA/1999/MISC.1).

6. Switzerland emphasized the need for more readily available, comprehensible information and documentation, including easy-to-understand and translated versions of materials such as the assessment reports of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and information from the Convention. It suggested a need for the Conference of the Parties to designate a resource centre with the task of collecting and making available copyright-free materials (FCCC/SBSTA/1999/MISC.1).

7. Kenya noted the need to disseminate to the general public existing information on climate change from the IPCC and the UNFCCC. It suggested that such information be repackaged for popular use. It urged that climate change be incorporated into school curricula and noted that countries might be assisted in this regard. Concerning national focal points, the submission highlighted the need for training to enable them to develop, share, adapt and disseminate climate change materials promoting adaptation and mitigation measures, as well as training in establishing national outreach programmes (FCCC/SBSTA/2000/MISC.3).

8. The United States described its approach in development assistance whereby education, training and outreach activities are integrated into long-term capacity-building efforts in response to needs expressed by developing countries. The United States' development assistance focuses on a range of climate-related activities that simultaneously build on the skills of in-country professionals. The United States advocated the use of the Internet for sharing information and educational materials, noting that this medium could be very useful for reaching the widest possible audience. It deemed as essential the need to engage NGOs in education and public

awareness efforts to inform broad populations on the importance of action at both the international and the national levels (FCCC/SBSTA/2000/MISC.3).

B. Side events

9. The side events which took place during SBSTA 12 in Bonn, Germany, SBSTA 13 in Lyon, France, and COP 6 in The Hague, the Netherlands, sought: to inform Parties on the status of implementation of Article 6; to encourage Parties, IGOs and NGOs to share their experience, and stimulate a discussion on the prioritization of issues. The side events drew upon national, regional and international experiences as a means to allow for a deeper understanding of needs, past, present and future activities, lessons learned and best practices.

10. The first side event, which took place during SBSTA 12, highlighted experiences from Parties, United Nations organizations and one NGO. Kenya, the Netherlands and the United States presented information on their national experiences, while UNEP/IUC (Information Unit for Conventions), the United Nations Institute for Research and Training (UNITAR) and the World Conservation Union (IUCN) provided information on their approaches, activities and products. The experience of the Netherlands showed the value of communications planning as a tool in policy development. Parties suggested that integrating communications with policy development ensured an increase in public awareness and also encouraged positive changes in behaviour at the individual level. It was noted that effective communications planning increased ownership and acceptance of policies adopted by the government. Among the lessons learned by Kenya was the need for tools for improving information dissemination. It was noted that a lack of tools hindered the government's efforts to comply with its commitments. Kenya pointed out that adequate and efficient tools, such as the availability of Internet access and resource centres, could improve the ability of the government to implement effective public awareness activities. The United States presented its "Climate Change Outreach Kit", developed for use by state and local governments. The kit, available on CD ROM and from the Internet (http://www.epa.gov/globalwarming/publications), provided target-specific public awareness material that had been developed on the basis of the results of surveys done to identify levels of awareness of target audiences. UNEP spoke of its experience in the preparation of information materials in cooperation with the IPCC and the UNFCCC secretariats as well as other organizations. UNITAR drew the conclusion in its CC:Train presentation that countries receiving the training were able to submit more national communications than those that did not. IUCN noted its networking experience among biodiversity-related institutions and organizations and how they were able to introduce these networks to climate change issues. Discussions by the participants following the presentations indicated a need by Parties to share information products between Annex I and Non-Annex I Parties, via the Internet, and to adapt them to the local context.

11. The SBSTA 13 side event included five presentations. France sponsored a presentation by postgraduate students from the Institut Universitaire Technologique of Saint-Etienne entitled "Youth Perspectives on Climate Change". Honduras gave a presentation on its experiences of public participation at the national level which included the preparation of a climate change book for use by pupils in elementary and secondary schools. The latter experience reinforced the idea of introducing climate change issues at the local level, be it through the education system or

through the media. El Salvador highlighted how it could benefit from other countries' experiences. These presenters also made the case for making available, in a range of languages, existing public awareness products. The experience from Asia featured the public awareness work of the Tata Energy Research Institute (India). The Fondation du Devenir shared its experience of working in Africa and Europe to increase public participation and awareness.

12. The COP 6 side event included the participation of the President of the sixth session of the Conference of the Parties and the UNFCCC Executive Secretary, and was followed by three presentations. The first highlighted the best practices of the Netherlands based on 10 years of awareness-raising activities at the national level. It showed how communications planning led to a wide range of products in many media, which effectively increased public awareness. The second emphasized regional networking and information exchange among small island States through the Small Island Developing States Network (SIDSNet). This innovative network provided an example of how decision makers from small island communities throughout the world can use the Internet effectively to increase communications while keeping costs low. The third presentation was the launch of *Vital Climate Graphics*, an information package developed by UNEP in consultation with IPCC, UNFCCC and other organizations. This collection of copyright-free graphics, suit for schools and public awareness activities, focuses on environmental and socio-economic impacts of climate change and responds to able the needs already expressed by many Parties in their submissions for interesting, easy-to-understand materials. Each of the presentations provided best practice in the field of communications planning and implementation, use of the Internet to enhance networking, and the production of basic information products.

C. Complementary information

13. Pursuant to decision 8/CP.5, the Consultative Group of Experts (CGE) was mandated to hold three regional workshops annually in Asia, Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC), with the aim of improving national communications from non-Annex I Parties. These meetings are intended to facilitate the exchange of experience and information on the preparation of national communications as well as to identify gaps in financial resources and technical support, and to identify barriers to this support. The discussions of the CGE included information relating to education, training and public awareness, and for this reason is included here.

14. The LAC meeting recommended that plans be prepared in the areas of public awareness, education and training (FCCC/SBI/2000/INF.4, para. 78). The meeting urged that support be strengthened to LAC countries in the preparation of national action plans in education, to encourage the introduction of climate change topics into the formal and informal education systems. It also called for the provision of equipment, technical support and training, and information systems, to national institutions and urged support for public awareness efforts outside the framework of the enabling activities. The inclusion of information on the activities programmed or implemented on public awareness in national communications for LAC was encouraged (FCCC/SBI/2000/INF.4, paras. 101 to 104). In order to build national support for vulnerability assessment and the implementation of adaptation strategies on a continuous basis, the CGE noted the importance of focusing national strategies in vulnerability and adaptation on

key sectors, and of encouraging the participation of main stakeholders in civil society (FCCC/SBI/2000/INF.4, para. 78). The need was identified, to provide and share information on the identification of regional training needs and the creation of a network of regional climate change centres, based on existing institutions, subregional organizations and national expertise (FCCC/SBI/2000/INF.4, paras. 105-107).

15. The African regional meeting noted the lack or inadequacy of national programmes in education, training and public awareness relating to climate change, either broad (the public) or targeted (academia, research institutions, policy makers, the media, industrial practitioners, formal/informal education, NGOs, community-based organizations) (FCCC/SBI/2000/INF.9, para. 54). Further, in almost all of the countries of the region participating in the workshop, there is a lack of facilities for regional information exchange and the development of expertise (FCCC/SBI/2000/INF.9, para. 55). Vis-à-vis vulnerability and adaptation assessments, the need to encourage the participation of main stakeholders in the formation of adaptation strategies was noted. It was recommended that information on adaptation planning and implementation should be integrated with public awareness, education and training and should be reported within the national communications (FCCC/SBI/2000/INF.9, para. 84).

16. The participants at the regional meeting in Asia noted that the low level of public awareness of climate change issues in some countries hinders the full participation and support of the public in formulation and implementation to meet the Parties' obligations under the Convention including reporting requirements concerning national communications (FCCC/SBI/2000/INF.10, para. 68). Regarding the UNFCCC guidelines contained in the Annex to decision 10/CP.2 (FCCC/CP/1996/15/Add.1), it was stated that the guidance given in the guidelines with regard to the information provided on the elaboration of national programmes relating to public awareness is inadequate and needs to be clarified (FCCC/SBI/2000/INF.10, para. 70). The report of the workshop also stated that there is a lack of institutional and technical capacity to assess public awareness needs relating to the causes and impacts of climate change and for the development and implementation of relevant public awareness programmes and activities. The lack of hardware and software and expertise to establish and maintain networking facilities for the exchange of information was noted (FCCC/SBI/2000/INF.10, para. 79). The report went on to recommend support to the least developed countries (LDCs) in Asia to assist them to create, to develop and to maintain national web sites, which could save expense in capacity-building and the sharing of information, and to suggest that such assistance may be provided by multilateral or bilateral cooperation (FCCC/SBI/2000/INF.10, para. 79).

17. In keeping with decision 8/CP.5, an interregional workshop of the CGE was held in Panama City, Panama, in March 2001 as a follow-up to the three CGE regional workshops. The participants noted the issue of public awareness, education and training as a "cross-cutting issue" relating to the preparation of national communications, to financial and technological needs and constraints, and to the improvement of the UNFCCC reporting guidelines (FCCC/SBI/2001/INF.1, paras. 89-111, 144 and 163 respectively). Among the range of recommendations, the UNFCCC secretariat was encouraged to develop, maintain and periodically update a clearing house mechanism on education, training and public awareness materials. Parties were encouraged to provide materials to the clearing house in the languages of

the United Nations, as well as in others, in order for such materials to be widely useful (FCCC/SBI/2001/INF.1, para. 108).

III. DISCUSSION

18. The information provided in section II, Summary of activities, identifies a range of needs relating to the implementation of Article 6. For ease of reference, these needs have been classified into 12 broad categories and are listed below. More information on these needs is provided in the table and its explanatory annex in FCCC/SBSTA/2001/6/Add.1.

Category 1: information sharing (cited by 70 per cent of the sources);

Category 2: public awareness of climate change (60 per cent);

Category 3: public participation (60 per cent);

Category 4: development of web sites (45 per cent);

Category 5: integration of climate change issues into the education curricula (45 per cent);

Category 6: provision of information products (40 per cent);

Category 7: development of communication plans (40 per cent);

Category 8: public access to climate change information (40 per cent);

Category 9: training (40 per cent);

Category 10: documents in local languages (30 per cent);

Category 11: funding (20 per cent);

Category 12: data harmonization (15 per cent).

19. Needs similar to those expressed above are noted in decision -/CP.6, Capacity-building in developing countries (non-Annex I Parties), wherein "education, training and public awareness" is included within the needs and areas for capacity-building listed in the Annex to the decision (FCCC/CP/2001/5/Add.1, Part Three, I, annex, para. 15 (n)). The need to "promote participation of, and dialogue between, a wide range of actors and constituencies" is noted among the guiding principles and approaches, within decision -/CP.6, Capacity-building in countries with economies in transition" (FCCC/CP/2001/5/Add.1, Part Three, annex, para. 11).

20. Concerning guidance to the Global Environment Facility (GEF) relating to Article 6, Parties might wish to take note of the launching of the GEF's Country Dialogue Workshops which seek, among other goals, to promote awareness raising. In addition, decision 2/CP.4, para. 1 (c) gives guidance on national activities relating to Article 4. Decision -/CP.6, Additional guidance to an operating entity of the financial mechanisms, requests that the GEF provide financial resources to developing country Parties, in particular the least developed and small island developing States, for a range of activities including "undertaking more in-depth public

awareness and education activities, and community involvement and participation in climate change issues" (FCCC/CP/2001/5/Add.1, Part Three, V, para. 1 (h)).

21. As described in section II. B, Side events, there are, in addition to expressions of needs, several examples of information products which may respond in whole or in part to the needs expressed. These include *Understanding Climate Change: A Beginner's Guide to the United Nations Framework Convention and its Kyoto Protocol* prepared by UNFCCC and UNEP, as well as the climate change information kit and the UNEP *Vital Climate Graphics*. Among others are the UNITAR CC:Train CD ROM and the Article 6 information clearing house prepared by the secretariat in cooperation with the Netherlands for the COP 6 outreach website (http://www.climatechange2000.org). Complementary to these information products produced at the international level, several Parties have produced interesting material for the national context. For example, Honduras has produced the climate change school textbook, while the Netherlands has prepared the course book, *Government Communications and Public Information*. Also shared with the participants at a side event and with the secretariat was the Climate Change Information Kit for States and Local Government prepared by the United States Environmental Protection Agency. Equally interesting are the reporting services of the International Institute for Sustainable Development, in particular its *Earth Negotiations Bulletin*, which provides regular summaries of daily discussions at meetings.

22. Concerning the designation of a day to be observed as a United Nations Climate Change Day, a consensus view did not emerge from the submissions received from the Parties. The secretariat has determined that it is possible for the Conference of the Parties to request the United Nations General Assembly to designate a day to be observed globally as United Nations Climate Change Day; however, the celebration of such a day would require significant resources at the international level for effective planning and publicity. Another option could be to create climate change awareness days at the national level as part of national public information campaigns.

23. Alternatively, climate change could be made the main theme on the World Environment Day (June 5), in any given year, or be incorporated as an area of focus in one of the 41 annual days already observed within the United Nations system, such as the International Day for Biological Diversity (May 22), World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought (June 17), or the International Day for the Preservation of the Ozone Layer (September 16). This approach would build upon existing commitments of resources and would increase information exchange on climate change between different sectors of society.

IV. OPTIONS

24. While proposals have been made on how to promote the implementation of Article 6, further work may be needed by Parties to prioritize their needs in order to develop a corresponding work programme for the SBSTA to address them.

25. Parties might wish to request the secretariat, resources permitting, to organize a workshop through which needs can be prioritized and elements of a programme of work defined. The workshop could also review how Parties might better integrate the reporting of Article 6 within the national communications by Parties.

26. Several United Nations organizations have significant experience and capability to contribute to the implementation of Article 6, among them the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR). Other intergovernmental and regional organizations, as well as many NGOs, work in areas relating to public awareness.

27. Parties might wish to request the secretariat, resources permitting, to continue to compile the lessons learned, best practices and information products prepared by Parties as well as United Nations agencies, IGOs and NGOs on a clearing house web site similar to that developed for COP 6 (www.climatechange2000.org).

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